

VOL. I **NUMBER** NO. 2



# CHINATOWN ISSUE

—traditional Chinese peasant songs  
translated and illustrated

**BY NANYING**

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# NUMBER

A MAGAZINE OF MODERN POETRY



## CONTENTS

NANYING . . . . .	5
<i>Nuptial Songs of a Chinese Village</i>	
KEN PETTITT . . . . .	18
Poem	
ROBERT BARLOW . . . . .	19
<i>The Gods in the Patio</i>	
ETHELFORD CARROL . . . . .	19
<i>Images</i>	
ELVA WILLIAMS . . . . .	20
<i>Two Poems</i>	
DON WOBBER . . . . .	21
<i>Four Poems</i>	
BETTY TURNOY . . . . .	23
<i>Three Poems</i>	
THE POETRY WORKSHOP . . .	24
<i>Worksheets and Poems by Helen Scales</i>	

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## EDITORIAL

In the first issue of *Number* we published some very simple poetry, on which we had favorable comment. But we also published some fairly difficult poetry, and although most readers seemed to like this work also, Miss Hazel Shilling, who teaches school in Petaluma, writes:

Editor Number:

Largely I have enjoyed this first issue of your new magazine. However I cannot say I understand all of the poems, or most modern poetry, as a matter of fact. There are several here (Alice Paula, Kenneth Pettitt, Helen Scales, to name a few) who seem as if they were saying something you could almost recognize, but as if they were using a foreign language in which I can only occasionally identify a word.

Is this school of poetry just for the inside few, or is there any way for a layman to catch on to what goes with these writers? I am willing to admit the skilful use of words here, and I know there's something to it—but it looks to me like a stairway with all the lower steps missing. How did the people who do understand this kind of poetry start in to begin to get hold of it? Or do you have to be born with a special gift?

*Hazel Shilling*

Other readers do seem to think that contemporary (or modernist) poetry, including that in *Number*, is very accessible. More so than traditional work, in one sense: for although the meaning is more difficult, interest is more easily held. You are willing to reread until you get the meaning.

However to answer Miss Shilling and others, we are willing to set aside some pages for informal discussion of such questions between reader and writer. To open discussion, in this issue Helen Scales, one of the writers Miss Shilling questions, is publishing both poems and worksheets, with something about her methods and what she is trying to say. This is in *The Poetry Workshop* on page twenty-four.

## INTRODUCTION TO BRIDAL SONGS

These Chinese marriage songs, reflecting the traditional formal reluctance of the Chinese bride, are the first published of a series of peasant songs, translated by Nanying.

As far as I know, this is the first translation of any of this source material into English. The Chinese poets have done little in the vernacular languages, for the classic language in which they wrote was capable of more subtle meanings, somewhat like those of associational poetry. Yet as a consequence the songs were never written down, were passed on by word of mouth, and would not easily be discovered by the occidental translator.

Those who know the songs today are still sensitive about this attitude of the scholars. And not knowing how a translation would be received, the women in the Chinatown factories in San Francisco, who sing these songs now, were not willing to have the words written and put into English, while they finally permitted her to write the words, they would not allow recordings of the music.

When Nanying brought me her first translations, she was naturally somewhat influenced by this attitude. In addition, like other modern Chinese in America, and many in China, she had been using occidental techniques in her poetry and painting, little influenced by Chinese tradition. For these reasons she was not sure how much these traditional songs would be valued by Americans. She explained that she was not trying to make a scholarly translation, but only to find words in English which would be honest to the emotion of the Chinese songs.

But it seems to me that it would be hard to indicate any purpose in poetic techniques except that of creating emotional "honesty." And I believe a modernist, at least, would be likely to think any adequate translation of these peasant songs would be valuable work.

In fact the modernist poet or artist is likely to be as enthusiastic about primitive cultures, and about the peasant cultures of civilized nations, as he is about conventionalized academic work, either of orient or occident. I think he is apt to be intensely interested in all cultures which are more or less shared by a whole population. It is as if there had been a turning-point somewhere in occidental civilization. And as the result of choices made then, we have come

to a situation in which a great many people share considerably in material civilization, without being civilized in a cultural sense. And because this seems an extraordinarily unhealthy and unstable situation there is now a very great interest in those cultures in which more of the people participate, where perhaps this wrong turn was not made.

Certainly any Chinese who wished to be truly modernist in the American sense, would be so most effectively, not through cutting himself off from his sources, but by seeing what he can bring over from the Chinese background into American culture.

—L. H.

### **BACKGROUND OF BRIDAL SONGS**

The village these songs were from is in the Fourth District, the city of Toysun near Canton in South China. The songs can be traced back centuries, but there is no record of their ever having been written down. Originally they were sung when ceremonies took place, but they became the folk songs of the small villages, and were sung just as folk songs the world over were sung, as an accompaniment to the work of the people.

Nanying got interested in these songs when she went to China to visit relatives. She heard the songs sung in Toysun and wrote some of them down as she heard them. On her return to San Francisco she noticed that one of her friends, an older woman, knew some of the songs she had heard in China. This friend told Nanying that in the sewing factory where she worked many of the older Chinese workers knew the same verses that she knew and more.

Nanying went to visit the sewing factories and saw young girls singing the songs too. She took down as many of the verses as she could, and had some of her friends do likewise. She went to other sewing factories and gathered more of the songs. Then she proceeded to translate them from the Chinese into English.

American clothing stores some fifty years ago began to recognize the skillful handwork done by the women from Toysun and nearby towns, which had specialized in this type of work for centuries. Merchants hired many of the skilled Chinese workers for factories in America. Here they have continued to use as an accompaniment to their work these traditional songs of their own villages.

—D. W.

**NUPTIAL SONGS OF A CHINESE VILLAGE**

**Translated by Nanying (Stella Wong) . . .**

(*The Bride begins her song*)

— 1 —

To and fro, to and fro,  
hardmouthed,  
shamelocked;

But tonight I must part my lips:  
Raising a daughter to sing to glorify house ancestors!  
Raising a golden rooster to crow for house prosperity!  
To sing till my notes reach the upper 3 houses  
till the notes reach the lower 6—  
to resound neighbors to the left and  
neighbors to the right!  
Wherever it resounds—  
let there be great prosperity!

— 2 —

In front of the doorway is the Wishing Grass,  
upon leaving, your daughter wishes  
father rich in wealth!

In front of the doorway is a Wishing Cabbage,  
upon leaving, your daughter wishes  
father great prosperity!



wanying

— 3 —

O respects to Ancestor

Tablets in upper hall,  
to gods and godesses in lower hall!

Upper hall lit with incense and joss  
brightening Altar of Ancestors!

Under, the silver lamps too are lighted  
to shine upon your small maiden . . .

O respects to the Gods of Heaven,  
may they bless this house

protect its people;  
respects to the two guardians of the door,

may they give a thousand attentions!  
Respects to the God of Earth,

Respects to the Kitchen God,  
may there be good cooking and much warm water,  
may the rice eaten each morning be bliss!

Respects to the pigs in the sty  
may the pigs grow round to 300 pounds!

Respects to the Skywell,  
and the three granite steps . . .

But don't hope for your small, outside slave  
to return to this Ancestor Hall;

May there grow in front of the house a Cypress tree,  
ten thousand seedlings,  
ten thousand progeny to household!

— 4 —

Tonight!

Like the eve of Public Festival—  
God of Heaven: Burn it all!  
Platforms, lanterns, flowers!  
White papers fly to invite  
cousins everywhere,  
they come shouldering punk and rice!

Punk and rice gathered, they begin to worship;  
O Scrolls!

The monks have brushed names . . .  
how come no one reads them?

But forces me, who of green springs  
to decipher!

— 5 —

The sun daggers the wall,  
the house prongs a shadow,  
good little sister puts away her thimble  
goes out to play;  
I put away my thimble  
only to lie across the bed  
face upwards, gaze lost in  
mosquito nets—  
my sorrow at moon . . .

— 6 —

Music of "Six Kingdoms Crowning Dignitaries,"  
the big drums tumult!  
Six horses pour into the Red,  
Uncles and Cousins dressed like legendaries;  
The peach blossom pushes, parting the breeze,  
under its wave, I, the peach blossom  
is blown down to the South . . .

— 7 —

One beat of the drum . . .

The East has not yet reddened,  
the West is not yet bright  
the North is young, beating  
the morning scarlet.

Two beats of the drum . . . cold, clear, and sharp . . .

Alone, my own sorry self  
beats the morning scarlet.

Three beats of the drum . . .

Three colors, red and flower packets  
of Lucky Coins—  
Three shallow reds,  
O pity my poor, lowly self!  
Going, going, to receive my noose.

Four beats of the drum . . .

Not long the sky shall be bright,  
If I frighten mother to wake  
it would be as it should be,  
If I frighten my bedful of sisters awake  
it would not be what I wish,  
If I sleep on . . . frightening Ming  
princesses of my dreams,  
they would sigh,  
for this is a long, long, lonely night.

Five beats of the drum . . .

Little pigs calling to open the door,  
ngut ngut ngut ngut ngut . . .  
Soon, soon the sky will brighten,  
the sighing princesses of this long night  
will walk away.



(*The Matchmaker*)

— 8 —

A tree grows tall  
    you need not cut  
Jade maid grows fair  
    You need not hunt

— 9 —

If I ask the door gods,  
would they mouth an answer?  
If I ask the matchmaker  
she would fling herself to street!

— 10 —

The soles of your feet worn till stone eggs grow  
The blab of your throat voiced till paired mumps swell,  
Day lights; you spill mucous, spill three bucketfuls!  
Night comes: you spill pus, spill three kegfuls!  
Spatter it to crest of hills—the grass withers,



Spatter it over fishpond—the fish poisons,  
 The back hills of the village  
     there is a thorny tree  
 Fork it down to prick your bones and skin!

— 11 —

Hand carrying Scarlet Birthcard  
     standing there in front of doorway  
 it is you—a post!  
 Hand carrying Scarlet Birthcard  
     leaning there by the door—  
         your legs a bamboo fence!  
 On your head, slant, slant, wearing old hat  
     about to do a devil's work—  
 you afraid or not?

— 12 —

Roll the grass mat  
     Break apart the bed,  
 I do not yearn for the Iron Cage  
     but my spirit already there!  
 One hand press your shoulder  
     (as if it was not I)  
 One foot steps on bamboo tray,  
     tray, tray, it rather dry the 5 grains;  
 The 5 grains, scatter to Banyan trees,  
     allow the wind to blow,  
 the hundred branches to split in buds . . .

— 13 —

At first stroke of comb,  
     Abundance!  
 At second stroke of comb,  
     Longevity!

Third stroke of comb,  
    comb back the coins and rice  
comb the coins to a mound,  
    Family Wealth!  
The hand holding the string of Red  
    Please tie it well  
Tie your fortune in  
    Generations!



— 14 —

Longoo thread linking coins together,  
    your daughter should not be used;  
Red thread linking the coins—  
    your daughter buys a road to walk.  
At leisure what have you been doing, that  
    you did not teach your daughter?  
You waited till last moment  
    to teach her—  
she can not absorb them in her heart!  
Each day you give coins to daughter to buy fruit,  
Today you give coins to buy a road to walk . . .

— 15 —

Open wide the gates  
    it is your daughter's dirge . . .

Close the big gates,  
     O Father, flourish!  
 Left hand close the door,  
     O Father, long life!  
 Yellow Mao grass, three chops of the knife,  
     Jade daughter follows this road,  
         its wind and dust,  
     Bamboo leaves in pairs, fall full on lanes . . .  
 Tell aunts and cousins:  
     Have heart,  
         stand on two or three roads,  
 Tell aunts and cousins:  
     Lay down  
         their thimbles and needles—  
         watch your slave's funeral!  
             (she is without guilt!)  
 Foot pressed on lotus plank,  
     my only self not calm to stand,  
 Foot stepped in Lotus Palanquin,  
     my only self not firm to sit—  
         shaking in jumps in jumps!

— 16 —

*(Inside her palanquin, on the way to the groom's village)*

Straight out into the road,  
     afraid of the wind,  
         the Wildgoose beats . . .  
 She pocks up her wings, shaking  
     like strings plucked  
         of moon guitar;  
 If she flies tall  
     the guns would shoot her,  
 If she flies close

the net would catch and stop her;  
Going up she cannot get at the sky,  
    coming down she can not get at the ground—  
Ten spirits and shadows  
    only reaching half sky  
Upon leaving mountain's edge  
    zip zip zip zip—picking leaves,  
Upon crossing the creek:  
    leeloomleeloom—diving into river!  
She wish she could pick and hold in her hand  
    36 Lohan Fruits  
        offer to the great gods  
        hoping for their care . . .  
The fruits are NOT for the small devils!

— 17 —

(*The groom's song*)

The New Groom sits at His Proper Place,  
    two borders of guests  
        come to congratulate!

Supreme Moment, Auspicious Date—  
    New Maid arrives  
        to this chamber,  
            Together,  
                heart happiness!

Lucky coins strewn over floor,  
    prosperity broad as the Eastern Sea,  
        Hundred sons,  
            Thousand grandsons,  
                Ten Thousand descendants!

— 18 —

The New Bride knows her manners,  
what she needs of her attendants?  
Attendants, too much pulling and pushing—  
hides dignity of bride!

You reached our door, now  
follow our customs  
and be quick—  
If you are not quick enough it won't do!

Now seven stars and the moon falling,  
the roosters crowing,  
It is late!



**Kenneth Pettitt . . .**

Admire if you will  
what is here presented as constrictory,  
no longer merely imagined  
by villains who unbuckle their beards  
in the twilight.

At dawn, when the butterflies are being cranked up,  
and the chipmunks are still in their sanctuary,  
poetry is constructed by a relaxative method,  
oh, those hod-headed, hammer-handed poets  
unplug their pots.

Habitual friendship requires: be at that place,  
where we will see them gather, adjust like sprats,  
achieve success by harmonizing prejudice.

One smiles, a daisy in the orbit of her lips,  
on the floor she drops her cigarettes,  
we are about to see them cleaned in public.

And among the fiddlers,  
there is a receipt of contrapuntals:  
the new, cherishable and smart,  
prized from their mobile containers,  
avoid the weather.

One has a toe shaped like a harp,  
in his arms there is a room for waltzing,  
and those others: ravens, robins, elves, and elks,  
pan them, flip them, fry them,  
or iron them into cards for distribution among the masses.

**Robert Barlow . . .**

### THE GODS IN THE PATIO

(*Museo Nacional de Arqueologia, Historia y Etnografia,  
Mexico, D. F.*)

Have the gods herded into some cave, their clumsy joints all bent  
in the direction of flight? Is there a spider hanging its gourd in the  
Jar of Tlaloc, where rain once shook golden rings? Are all the  
Cholula plates broken?

O Tiger Knight, I saw your torso like a maize-ear, I saw the  
rusty roses on your garment. I saw princes who would be beautiful  
if they were statues, who envied only the snake the jaguar and the  
ant. How long must they lie, the robbed and fragrant dead, by the  
Snake Well, the Coatepantli?

**Ethelford Carrol . . .**

### IMAGES

"Old man," I said, "steeple cannot hide in moonlight,  
Pockets wait tomorrow's thrust of sleep-limp hands,  
A creaking floor bursts from the silent darkness  
Into a thousand thousand cricket bands."

"Old man," I said, "a tuft of gray mouse fur sticks to  
my fingers,  
Pulsing crowns of butterflies halo the blind,  
Water beads, unstrung, glide on the silk-soft curtain  
That hides from you, old man, the bathings of my mind."

**Elva Williams . . .**

**ONE**

Without grammar, silence confides though  
The weather of others,

In secret the hooded heart  
Is squeezed like an accordion.  
But the nostrils, live as minnows, tell  
We are eating hope like yardage  
In furlongs long,  
And behind the gaudy laughter  
Muffled dogs are ravening.

The stubborn tongue  
Is a paralysis of listening  
Whose calling  
Will move the lone dumb mountains from our skin.

**TWO**

What rood — I — on the sea wracked mind  
By sea I mean the saw and surge and blast  
The prodigious wash of flaying self  
That cannot secede, cannot, I say  
Though mauled in the brothels of the inturned eye  
The stiff and obdurate eyelids locked  
In an augury of wait . . . .

Oh the handsome,  
The wide-windowed handsome walk  
Upright into bold disasters  
Wearing their scars like cellos.

**Don Wobber . . .**

### THE SUN AND DEATH

The Mandarin and lion man  
Flowered no Friday feet —  
Hens, the air did wrent of, and gold  
Wrens dragged wallward their hinds.

Try with tarry-foot or  
Crows this May crucified  
And again and again the hollow hollar  
Sends glens after gifts of one.

### MAN IS

Man is many busses one gets past,  
Past old cellars, where the dumb venture.  
The slave dictates for him, for him  
The nighted mare turns noiselessly.

Turn, pod-sick Angels,  
The oceans equinox  
Cubes its noises like temperate gallows,  
Leaving death.

### ONE

Oh yes, the slurp soup  
Brave, throwing their ladles  
To left and to right, holding  
Cables far above water, clicking  
Clacking, clucking in some unfathomable  
Tongue or smarting beans across tables.

Oh yes, the brave,  
I know them smiling under ladders  
Shaking horns to pieces  
Their mower noses  
Running along everyone's lawns.

I know the brave pacing with  
Crutches raised high  
To lop some peddler sideways  
With longitudinal blows  
Some weaker, meeker than I.

## **FOUR**

By night then on the plateau  
I saw you, old world, with  
The warm tree-knocking immigrant.

I saw you standing by the watchman.  
By morning nuns under their shelves,  
By merchant, binder, moulder of knives,  
By tinker, hanger,  
And I asked in which direction  
The shelled paths of you led?

I woke on rails  
That no train crosses, covered  
With lawn, with the  
Shadow of daughters.  
And I woke by the wheels and the swords,  
And the birds were singing beside  
Their boats, under the gleam of bones.

**Betty Turnoy . . .**

**ONE**

Eyes duplicate enemies  
Really want what love headlines  
Long, uncommon brows  
Latitude and longevity.

**RESEARCH HEAD**

She fluted herself a fortress  
Brave and buttressed against butterflies  
Arpeggios  
Of wit blister  
Singed wings curl at her feet  
Like watercress—  
A phoenix risen—  
Welcome, woman, to the archives.

**THREE**

One knows that a tree is  
in beginning that it grows  
but love is like wind going  
either way over a wall  
is inside climate the heart knows.

## **POETRY WORKSHOP**

It is important to say that Helen Scales, whose worksheets and poems follow, is not presenting herself here as a finished poet, but as a writer who is learning the techniques of her poetry, and in this capacity would like to discuss ideas and methods with others who might have suggestions.

But she is working by an interesting concept: that the notation of modernist poetry is a kind of semantics, exact, but difficult to use and she thinks it is most efficient, in learning this semantics, not to approach it in a deadly attitude of seriousness, or to set up problems in making poetic content before techniques are controlled. She says:

I worked entirely in the spirit of play, or exercising, of practicing using words. I was not trying to make a poem.

I wrote automatically, sometimes only letters, at other times, words and phrases. My first attempts were almost like playing, moving letters around, trying words in different positions in relation to each other, inserting vowels between consonants (so that the letters "brd," for example, could be barred, bared, braid, broad, breed, bred, beer, bier, bird, bore, bored, boor, Boer, burr, or broid, suggesting embroidery).

In the beginning I didn't make any attempt to do this in any way except very mechanically. While spelling words aloud, I made my hand write different letters from those my attention was on. Later it became easier to write entire words and phrases. These letters, words or phrases formed units of language with which I played, inserting vowels where two consonants came together, moving phrases around, exploring every possible combination of the units.

Most of the automatic material was unusable. Pages and pages daily were mere exercises in juxtaposition of phrases which could not be used, much of which was wholly unsatisfactory as poem material.

The following worksheets are examples of the best of this work. "The Tigers Dead," "Write on the Tide a Steady Oar," and "Holy Thursday, 1950" were done directly in this way, without revision. "Some Battle Won" and "Statement Before Ascencion" were made after working over some of this material. The less interesting lines were cut in all worksheets except the first.

### HOLY THURSDAY: 1950

O go, rim of names:

- Black honor in the air  
Soots the spies and the suitors,  
Dies in an arid sun, on roads ridden by error.

Lamb, mover of Balaam,  
Out of no Hannibal knowing,  
Out of no animal blame.

Sailor on poem or teaspoon,  
In my brain is a nard.

Bunted or time-matched Vessel  
That tallies these tombs;  
Deeper rove eastly, nighted as dipper or star.

### AUTOMATIC 6/13/49

The tigers dead, the timothy grass  
swept by a tumult of wind.

It is the time of gnats.

Pray for corporate martyrs, may-makers  
carping, at syrup of these bays,  
crop of meek-creepers, curs.  
They merit the myrrh cup.

And the bees boom to the flowers  
occurring in these acres,  
rotary wheelers who tear the roots of honey  
from gardens.

Climb up the opal walls to garrets  
where clams of memories dry in shells.

#### **AUTOMATIC WRITING 6/25/49**

Write on the tide a steady oar,  
and daily the dole of marguerites  
rots in the mow of yard.

On the tip of islands  
a lame mariner is dying.  
Dials of seas move  
under a mural sun.

Reel, roll,  
peal sea bells to the pylon planets  
distant as painted eyes.

Roars of the lion days cram our diaries.  
Dear Charlemagne: Moby Dick still,  
white derrick, wrecks these men,  
their limbs hurl beyond finger-reach  
of light. I remember a world  
in which a richer moon illumined the almonds.

**SOME BATTLE WON**

Some battle won.

So lay your swords on the breasts of children,  
Unformed as fruit in flower.

For the marriage-beds deeper than trenches  
Bind ring to ring  
The scabbards of the living.

**STATEMENT BEFORE ASCENSION**

And one knows the mole, elbowless, handless  
As tulip bulb.

My face wears his  
When floods enter the cemetery of rivers.  
The waters hold as a trust the banks of tigerlilies,  
Disordered as vaulted enemy.

You of mimosa eyes  
Swirled into foreign waterwheels,  
What feathers do you lift  
Over the black cat turning his yellow suns  
Through our streets  
And what remember of crow or gospel  
Told of the moons?  
Shade moves you as the day's perambulations.  
Your hands walk on stilts.

Higher than sunset  
You bend into forever—Body without clock, dial,  
Vesper, chime.

Helen Scales assumes her readers are familiar with the usual methods of automatism. For those who are not, present concepts, which derive chiefly from the surrealists, accept the idea that the conscious mind is too conventional. Consequently they emphasize the importance of getting access to levels of mind and emotion which are below the conscious. The surrealists seem to think that something like genius is possible to anyone who can get sufficient release of emotion and image from the deeper mind.

However they also insisted the poem should be entirely "dictated" from the unconscious—both detail and organization. Most writers, even the surrealist now, admit it is necessary to combine such automatism with conscious control of technical material.

With Helen Scales, apparently the musical elements of language were the agents of the automatism, and had an almost hypnotic effect. She says:

I found that the heightened alliteration and vowel combinations made a communication of their own. I had a feeling that language had values and meaning which existed in language alone, apart from logical communication. And as I worked, the words themselves, in groups or singly, began to create their own form, seemed to insist on combining in one way and no other.

Since the automatic writing was done without reference to other material, and the language used was derived from subjective sources, the words had associations for me which inevitably became meanings in the poem. After this I found a practical need for all I knew and had learned and was learning, in order to establish conscious control over my material.

I began doing automatic writing with the hope of disassociating my hand from my conscious mind, which persisted in forming logical and traditional patterns. But in the following poems—some automatic, some not—I think that these experiments with automatism have brought me to discover a more personal and therefore more honest poetic content.

**BEAST YOU CAN LOVE**

— 1 —

Came angels together. Assault. Cameos of night winds.  
Called anyone.  
Never gestured answer.  
Be beast, get meaning,

So scenes came: came also letters and the aspened sound,  
Ancestor-going.

Gull ghost. Bent, spindrift future, bird slaying.  
Slate sea erasing a chalked and feathered official.  
Ghost of anyone: Cain.

Sensory capitals of eye and ear,  
Ancestral explorers: Angels aspire and lean as ancestors.  
Around all flesh. Asterisked stars, splitting and seeding  
A cold sky with luster.  
Crossing. Alleys of surprises.

Ago long sentences went,  
Beasts taught cemeteries and cypress.  
Slanted ceilings. Stones. Speaking  
And answering speech.

And westerly, by all ways, winds:  
Going somewhere. Anywhere. Nowhere.

— 2 —

Rhinoceros, whiter than white,  
Seven-hooped, tusked,  
I dreamed and found you a beast and beautiful.

You grazed above the quarry below the lookout  
And I froze in feathers of fear and knew not how to proceed,  
Whether past boulders or upward to the height  
Toward which you fed.

The strangers said you were beautiful,  
But if you were, it was with terror you were clothed  
Bestially among boulders and grasses.

— 3 —

Eve, o, even Eve  
remarks how everyone  
listens away from love:  
Putting love's face away in pocket mirrors:  
Flee fast from balustrade's forever of fever.  
Gain halter and rein,  
a barrack of cemetery.

— 4 —

The flesh that dresses  
moves our love out of bone  
mouthing not marrowed.

What skeletons feel not in coffins  
Feel. What bones forget.

And is this so, my love?  
The flesh surrounds us in motion  
We name love, in wonder following passion  
That our eyes see. And how beyond time goes.

— 5 —

Beast you can love  
after the skin is loosed  
after lease and lust  
cure the timber of heart.  
  
And you can see  
leaving last eyes  
the falling of simples  
as cemeteries' stones.

I regret that there is not space here for a more complete discussion of the content of Miss Scales poems. One of the questions most frequently asked especially by the reader unfamiliar with modern poetry, is "what does this specific line mean?", or "is there any meaning in this poem parallel to logical meaning"? I believe this is one of the few magazines in which the writers respect and are willing to answer questions asked by those not yet familiar with the approaches and language of modern poetry.

Modern work is often written in a different sort of language than older poetry. But I think it is actually extremely accessible, although the conservative is not likely to think so. Letters should be addressed, not to the poets published in *Number*, but to this department, *The Poetry Workshop*.

—L. H.

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Nanying:** (Nanying Stella Wong) is now at the college of Mexico City studying under Margaret Shedd on the Richard Duval Scholarship awarded to her to complete a novel.

**Kenneth Pettitt:** has had poems published in the *Quarterly Review of Literature* and many local magazines.

**Robert Barlow:** head of the department of Archaeology at the University of Mexico City. Published *View From a Hill* which has been well received, and has been in *Quarterly Review of Literature, Pacific*, etc.

**Ethelford Carrol:** employed in a laboratory at the University of California. Published in *Accent* and other magazines.

**Elva Williams:** published in the first issue of *Number*. We hope to present more of her work in the future.

**Don Wobber:** editor of *Number*.

**Betty Turnoy:** published in the first issue of *Number*. Worked on the staff of the *Chicago Sun*.

**Lawrence Hart:** edits The Poetry Workshop, beginning in this issue, is advisory editor of *Number*, and teaches the Workshop in Poetry Writing for the University of California Extension (both Nanying and Helen Scales are studying with him).

**Helen Scales:** has been published in *Experiment*, *Interim*, and many university reviews. Three poems were published by her in the first issue of *Number*.

NOTE: We hope that the regrettable but necessary delay in bringing out this issue of *Number*—which is a fall rather than a summer issue—is made up for by the several unusual features the extra time permitted us to obtain, including the illustrations, by Nanying of her poem translations. Subscribers will receive the full four issues.

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